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ABSTRACT

The way in which graduate students in a course in school organization and administration at Washington State University (Pullman) have been guided through conducting original case studies of the administrators and others working in public schools and school districts was studied, as was the impact of these studies on the students. Students were given practical parameters for the case study, such as selection of subject and site; and guidelines relating to theory, methods, and procedures necessary for qualitative research were also provided. Oral presentations were required at intervals. A limited study examined the impact of the case study experience on 44 students from 1988 through 1990. A 51-item close-ended self-response survey, the Leadership and Role Study Questionnaire, concerning the context and impact of the case study research experience was developed and sent to these students. Analysis is based on the return of 23 (56.8 percent) usable questionnaires. Results confirm that the case study research experience does provide students with theoretical knowledge of qualitative research and educational research in particular. Students also gain a relatively high level of substantive knowledge, with the greatest practical gain in interviewing skills and the least in writing. Two figures illustrate the framework and results of the impact study. Appendix A lists the 41 leadership case studies, appendix B contains the questionnaire, and appendix C contains the matrices for the study. (SLD)

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AN INVITATION TO SHARE CRAFT KNOWLEDGE: STUDENTS AS CASE RESEARCHERS AND WRITERS

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AN INVITATION TO SHARE CRAFT KNOWLEDGE: STUDENTS AS CASE RESEARCHERS AND WRITERS

Introduction

There are two important purposes of this paper. One purpose is concerned with the way graduate students in a course, titled School Organization and Administration, have been guided through conducting original cases studies of administrators and others working in public schools and school districts. The second purpose is concerned with the impact of these studies on the students who conducted the studies. This paper is divided into five sections. Following this brief introduction, the second section is concerned with a discussion regarding the need for student-conducted case studies in educational administration courses. The third section presents the way graduate students have been guided in conducting case studies. The fourth section explores the impact of conducting the study on the students in terms of craft and research knowledge gained. The paper concludes with a fifth section which contains several observations and recommendations.

The Need for Original Case Studies

The Foundational Educational Administration Literature: The Problem

The literature which typically serves as the foundation for the preparation of public school administrators (see, for example Hanson, 1985; Hoy & Miskel, 1987; Kimbrough & Nunnery, 1988; Morphett, Roe, & Reller, 1982; Silver, 1983) has eight characteristics which are important to recognize. First, the

literature has a high level of abstraction. The literature contains an abundance of generalities and relatively few specifics. Consistent with the abstract character of the literature, specific craft knowledge is typically not part of the literature. Here craft knowledge means the specific actions administrators take in fulfilling the functions of management, socialization, evaluation, and communication in their work.

Second, related to the first characteristic is how the literature considers leadership. The foundational literature usually addresses the topic of leadership in general and educational leadership in particular. However, what leaders actually intend, and how they act, believe, and behave, in educational organizations is not specifically addressed. With very few exceptions, authentic examples of leaders are not presented.

Third, at least implicit in the educational administration literature is the belief that high levels of organizational maintenance and productivity as well as organizational stability and change are tightly linked with administrator competence. Conversely, the literature assumes that low morale and low productivity as well as organizational instability and resistance to change are related to administrator incompetence. Typically, the literature does address the organizational and extra-organizational factors which are related to organizational maintenance and productivity, and organizational stability and change.

Fourth, the literature in educational administration does not address the use of power by school administrators. By not directly discussing the use of power as a means of administrative control, the literature tacitly assumes that competent administrators should and can always achieve control through willful compliance.

Fifth, the personal agonies often experienced by individual administrators and privately shared among administrators regarding what decisions to make and what decisions should have been made are not part of the educational administration literature. The style and tone of the educational administration literature suggests that competent school administrators are always self-confident and make no mistakes.

Sixth, the effect of cultural differences within a school and community on the work of educational administrators is rarely, if at all, discussed in the foundational educational administration literature. By omission, it is assumed that one style of competent educational administration is appropriate in all cultural and multicultural settings.

Seventh, the literature, with few exceptions, assumes that the work of school administrators is gender-neutral. This is to say that gender as an explanatory factor in the work of school administrators is not usually considered.

And eighth, the literature designed specifically for the purpose of preparing educational administrators does not devote much space to discussing how knowledge of educational administration is generated and reported.

It can be concluded that in general the literature which is foundational to the preparation of public school administrators provides a limited, abstract, and rather rosy picture of public school administration. Additionally, a detailed description and analysis of how educational leaders act and how their actions are related to the organizational and extra-organizational context is not addressed. Furthermore, cultural and gender considerations are rarely considered. Also, the literature does not emphasize to any extent the issue of how knowledge in educational administration is generated, evaluated, reported, and disseminated.

Student Produced Literature: A Solution

In response to the characteristics of the literature foundational to the preparation of educational administrators, additions need to be incorporated. These additions can be understood at a practical, substantive, and theoretical level. At a practical level, what is needed are a variety of detailed pictures of authentic and competent school administrators, both women and men at work in the context of real schools, real districts, and real communities. At a substantive level, what is needed are detailed pictures which contrast the work of administrators with administrators <u>as leaders</u>. And, at a theoretical level, what is needed is a more thorough theoretical understanding of the work of public school administrators at work in schools, districts, and communities.

A response to the characteristics of the foundational literature used in the preparation of educational administrators

and consistent with the needs presented above is to provide students preparing for roles in educational administration with a set of experience through which they can generate research literature to augment the foundational literature. The student generated literature should provide a rich, frank, and balanced description and analysis of the work of public school educational administrators and show how the work of educational administrators is related to the organizational and extra-organizational context. Additionally, the experiences through which students produce literature should provide them with an authentic social science research experience, albeit limited in scope.

The Case Study Research Experience

The Purpose

One feasible avenue through which students in graduate educational administration course can produce research literature is to provide the students with a research experience through which they design, conduct, and report case studies of experienced administrators working in public schools. Such an approach has been used since 1986 in the School Organization and Administration course offered by the Department of Educational Administration and Supervision at Washington State University. Over the past four and one-half years, students enrolled in this course have been guided through a case study research experience. In the course, sometimes the case studies have been referred to as role studies, and, at other times, the studies have been referred to as leadership studies. Regardless of what they have

been called, during the eight times the course has been offered since 1986, about 80 case studies have been conducted and reported by students.

In addition to at least providing a partial solution to the literature problem discussed above, the more specific purposes of providing a case study research experience for students in the course, School Organization and Administration, are: (1) To develop a deep understanding of the actions of individuals who work in schools, particularly school administrators, and the factors in the context of their work which condition their actions, (2) to develop observational, data collection, analytic, and writing skills which are useful to school administrators, (3) to develop research skills through conducting an original research project, and (4) to develop a genuine understanding for and appreciation of social science research, particularly qualitative research. Although not central to the purpose of the research experience, it must be acknowledged that a purpose of the case study experience is to provide data and analyses which are useful to the professor teaching the course.

Parameters for Case Studies

In the graduate level course, School Organization and Administration, students are required to select the site where the case study will be conducted, the position which will be the focus of the study, and the individual who holds the position at the site selected. In order that students will be able to conduct and complete a case study effectively and efficiently, they are given <u>parameters</u> for the case study. Here, the term

parameters refers to set of conditions which students must meet or meet as closely as possible in initiating, conducting, and completing the case study. The parameters are of two types, theoretical and practical.

Theoretical

In organizations or units within organizations, when experienced administrators and other staff members are hired from outside the organization, there is a high probability that the organization is in a period of transformation and change and that the administrators or staff members have a mandate to make change. In organizations which are undergoing change, typically organizational factors and the work of individuals within the organization are somewhat exaggerated, hence they are easier to observe than otherwise would be the case. Therefore, students are given the theoretical parameter of selecting an individual for the focus of the case study who is experience in a role yet relatively new to a position and who has come to the position from outside the organization. Additionally, students are cautioned not to select an individual as the focus of the study who is very close to retirement.

In schools and school districts, administrative and certain staff roles vary considerably with organizational size. Organizational size of schools and school district is usually indicated by student enrollment. For example, in very small schools, the principal may also be a teacher, and in small school districts, the superintendent may also be a principal. In order simplify the case study by focusing on an individual who holds

only one position, students are given the theoretical parameter of selecting an individual for inclusion in the case study in a school or district which has a size such that the individual clearly hold only one position.

Practical

In order to increase the probability of selecting an individual for inclusion in the study who will be honest and forthright as well as keeping research cost to a minimum, students are given the following practical parameters for conducting the case study. The individual selected for inclusion in the study must be unknown to the researcher, and the study must be conducted in a site which is easily accessible to the researcher. Students are also advised not to let organizational or personal reputation be a guide to site and/or individual selection.

Guidance in Conducting Case Studies

In addition to establishing parameters for the case study, students enrolled in the course are given guidance during the course concerning how to conduct a case study. Here, guidance refers to instruction regarding the theory, methods, and procedures which are necessary to conduct a case study employing a qualitative research methodology (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Lofland & Lofland, 1984; Shatzman & Strauss, 1973).

There are a variety of topics included under the general theme of guidance. These topics are not necessarily presented in the logical order as might be found in text concerned with conducting case studies employing a qualitative research

methodology. The topics are, however, presented in an order and at times when they will have practical and/or theoretical significance to students. For example, a presentation regarding the theoretical foundations of qualitative research, which is typically presented at the beginning of a research methodology text, is presented in the latter part of the school administration course after students have had considerable practical experience in using qualitative research procedures. Also, it is important to note that most topics are presented more than one time. As students gain practical experience and theoretical sophistication in conducting case studies employing qualitative research methods, topics are typically reintroduced and presented at a more detailed level.

In the order in which they are introduced, the topics which comprise the theme of guidance include: (1) The researcher as learner and not evaluator; (2) the construction of open ended, semi-structured interview guides; (3) proposals for conducting case studies, (4) gaining efficient and stable access to the field; (5) how to listen; (6) recording and managing field data; (7) how to observe; (8) the importance of documents; (9) taking pictures; (10) analytic frameworks, (11) analyzing field data; (12) theoretical foundations of qualitative research; (13) report formats and styles; (14) writing reports of case studies, and (15) oral presentations of case studies.

It is important to emphasize that the course in which the case studies are conducted is not a research course. It is a foundational educational administration course. Hence, although

the research topics included in the educational administration course may be presented in considerable detail in general and/or specialized research courses, the topics listed above are presented in the School Organization and Administration course in only enough detail and only at a level of sophistication which will allow the students to have a satisfactory and useful case study research experience.

Requirements for Conducting Case Studies

In addition to establishing parameters for conducting case studies and providing guidance in conducting case studies, specific requirements are establish for the production of case studies. The term requirements refers to specific deadlines for specific parts of a case study submitted in a specific format. The requirements are established to bring an ordering structure for conducting and reporting case studies. Additionally, the requirements are established to bring salience of the case study experience to students are particular times. Requirements are of two types, written and oral.

Written Requirements

In order to insure that each case study is completed in a systematic and timely fashion, the students are required to complete for evaluation various parts of the case study at specific times. The required parts of the case study are intended to build on each other to achieve a satisfactory completion of the final report of the case study.

The required parts of the case study include: (1) A proposal to conduct the case study, (2) the field data (3) the first half

of the final case study report, and (4) the complete case study report. Additionally, each of the parts is required to be submitted within particular style and format guidelines.

A proposal to conduct a case study is required for submission and evaluation very early in the course. Typically, the proposal for the study includes sections presenting an introduction to the study, the purpose of the study, the theoretical perspective which will guide the research, the research design and methodology including guides for semi-structured interviews, the perspectives used and procedures employed for data analysis, and the report of the study. Although the proposal is required to be written as a proposal, substantial parts of it may be used in subsequent requirements which are submitted at later dates.

During the preparation of the proposal for the case study, student experience a fair level of anxiety and uncertainty. For many, developing and writing the research proposal is their first experience with designing, conducting, and reporting a research project. Anxiety is attempted to be managed by making available example proposals written by the professor and previous students. Additionally, anxiety is attempted to be managed through the evaluation process. For the proposal requirement, the evaluation will only be considered in the evaluation of the final case study report if the final case study report does not receive a higher evaluation than the proposal. Uncertainty due to inexperience is managed by making the example proposals available and tends to

diminish with time as students gain self-confidence in conducting research.

After one-third to one-half of the course has progressed, students are required to submit their field data for review and evaluation. As noted in a previous section, prior to the initiation data collection, students are provided with considerable guidance regarding appropriate materials for recording and storing field data, and appropriate methods for recording, filing, and managing field data. Additionally, prior to data collection, students are shown authentic examples of field data. The importance of the appropriate type and size of paper is stressed as well as are the appropriate writing materials and page bindings. The proper identification and logging of field documents is also discussed.

When the field data requirement is due, students present a display of their data on a table during part of a class session. Students are encouraged to examine how others have filed, bound, and generally organized their data for analysis. During the time data are displayed, the professor examines and evaluates each student's field data. Also, students are provided a form which guides them through a self-evaluation of their own field data and on which they evaluate their data.

About two-thirds of the way through the course, students are required to submit a draft of what will be about the first half of their final case study report. Typically, the draft includes a section introducing the case study, a section presenting the purpose of the study, a section explaining the research design

and methodology, a section describing the community, district, school where the case study was conducted, a section describing the role of the individual and the individual who was the focus of the study, and a section summarizing the analytic framework used to analyze the field data. As noted previously, substantial portions and/or revised portions of the proposal can be used in the first-half report requirement.

The first-half of the final report requirement is evaluated in terms of traditional research publication criteria taking into account the level of research experience and sophistication of the individual researcher. The drafts are returned with comments regarding suggestions for improvement. Following the evaluation of the draft, the professor is available for consultation. As with the proposal to conduct the study, the evaluation of a draft is only considered in the overall evaluation of the final report if the final report is given a lower evaluation that the first-half draft.

During the last several days of the course is the deadline for the final report requirement. In addition to the sections typically contained in the first-half report requirement, the final report of the case study usually contains a section on analyzing the field data in terms of the purposes of the case study and employing the analytic framework presented in a previous section, a section which summarized the conclusions of the study reached in the analysis section, and a section containing implications of the study for professional practice

and further research. The final report usually contains a reference section and may contain various relevant appendices.

In preparing the final report, students may use sections from previous requirements in original or rewritten form. Evaluation of the final report requirement are made in terms of traditional research report criteria.

Oral Requirements

During the case study research experience, the opportunity for students to talk about the experience helps to reduce anxiety and uncertainty during the experience, build confidence, and clarify understanding of both the research process and what is being learned about the role and/or leader. During specific class sessions of the course, students are required to make oral presentations regarding what they are learning about the role or leader they are investigating. Additionally, they are required to give oral presentations regarding their experiences in data collection.

During the case study research experience, the professor establishes extended periods of times during which students may meet with him and present summaries and analyses of their field Although not a specific requirement, students are encouraged to make an appointment and meet with the professor to give interim oral summaries of their case studies.

In addition to meeting with the course professor to give summaries and analyses of their case study field data, students are also encouraged, yet not required, to present to each other summaries and analyses of their field data. In cases where

students work in pairs on a case study, discussion of data and analyses of data take place as a matter of course.

Typically, during the final week of the course, students are required to prepare and present a formal presentation of their case study. In these presentations, students are strongly encouraged to focus the presentation on the substantive conclusions of the case study rather than on the research methods.

Following a section of the course and/or following several sections of the course, the professor typically selects four or five of the cases studies which are particularly insightful, well written, and collectively reinforce one another for inclusion in a symposium proposal for presentation at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association and/or the Annual Research Conference of the Washington Educational Research Association. Students who have participated in presentations report a challenging yet exceedingly worthwhile experience.

The Impact of the Case Study Research Experience: A Study

Purpose of the Study

In order to assess the impact of the case study experience on student researchers, a limited study was conducted. There were three purposes of the study. The first was to assess the impact of the case study experience in terms of knowledge gained from the focus of the study. The second purpose was to assess the impact of the case study experience in terms of knowledge gained from the research process. And, the third purpose was to investigate the relationships of the impact of the case study

experience and the context of the case study research experience. The overall purpose of the study was to assess the impact of the case study experience on the graduate students enrolled in the course School Organization and Administration and relate the impact with factors in the context of the research experience.

Research Design and Methodology

Design

To achieve the purposes of the study, it was decided to assess the impact of the case study research experience on the students who had conducted and completed case studies in the course, School Organization and Administration, by questioning the students regarding the impact of the experience as well as regarding their personal context during the research experience.

Character

A decision was made to conceptualize and formulate the study as a descriptive study yet guided by a theoretical framework concerned with the individual context of the case study research experience and the personal impact of the case study experience.

Scope and Limitations

As noted previously, about 80 case studies have been produced in the course over a period of about 4 1/2 years by about 80 students. However, since the initiation of the case study experience in 1986, the parameters, guidance topics, and requirements have somewhat changed. In order to reduce the contextual variability due to changes in parameters, guidance, and requirements, it was decided to limit the study to include only those students in the study sample who had been involved in

the case study experience beginning with the 1988-1989 academic year.

During the 1988-1989 academic year the course was offered twice and involved 9 and 12 respectively. During the 1989-1990 academic year, the course was also offered twice and involved 9 and 14 students respectively. Hence, the number of students selected for inclusion in the study sample was 44, roughly half the number of students who had been involved in the case study experience since 1986.

It should be noted that during the time period covered by the study sample, students were allowed to work in pairs on the case study research experience. Of the 44 students included in the study sample, 6 selected to work in pairs. Hence, during the time period covered by the study, 38 students conducted individual case studies and 6 worked in pairs producing in all 41 case studies. The authors and titles of the 41 case studies are included in Appendix A.

Methodology

In order to assess descriptively the impact of the case study research experience on individual students as well as assess their personal contexts during the case study research experience through efficient questioning of individual students, it was decided that a survey research methodology would be employed. The survey would be in the form of a close-ended, self-response survey instrument. In the following section, theoretical details of the survey instrument are discussed, and

the practical aspects of the administration of the survey instrument are presented.

The Survey Instrument

In order to realize the purposes of the study, a survey instrument was developed designed for self-response by each graduate student in the study sample. Consistent with the purposes of the study, there were three purposes of the survey instrument. The first was to assess the impact on the graduate student researcher of the knowledge gained from the focus of the case study. The second purpose was to assess the impact of the knowledge gained from the research process. And, the third purpose was to explore the relationship of the impact of the case study research experience on the graduate student researcher and the factors in the context of the research experience.

Theoretical Framework

Consistent with the purposes of the study and survey instrument, a two-part theoretical framework was developed to guide instrument development. One part of the theoretical framework is concerned with (I) the graduate student context of the case study research experience. And, the other part is concerned with (II) the impact of the case study research experience on the graduate student.

The (I) context of the study is considered in terms of (A) contextual factors and (B) experiential time when the case study was conducted. The (A) contextual factors are further considered in terms of (1) programmatic factors, (2) course factors, and (3)

individual factors. And, experiential time is further considered in terms of (1) past, (2) present, and (3) future.

The (II) impact of the study is considered in terms of (A) knowledge gained by the graduate student and (B) experiential components of the case study. The (A) knowledge gained is further considered in terms of (1) theoretical knowledge, (2) substantive knowledge, and (3) practical knowledge. And, the (B) experiential components are further considered in terms of (1) the role investigated in the case study and the (2) research processes employed in conducting the case study.

A representation of the theoretical framework is presented in Figure 1.

The Questionnaire

Employing the theoretical framework as a guide, a self-response survey instrument, titled the Leadership and Role Study Questionnaire, was developed. The Questionnaire contains forty-seven required response items and four option response items. Of the forty seven items, thirty are concerned with assessing the individual student context of the case study experience, and seventeen are concerned with assessing the impact of the case study research experience on the individual student. Appendix B contains a copy of the Leadership and Role Study Questionnaire. And, Appendix C contains an item-by-factor matrix for the Questionnaire.

Figure 1

A Representation of the Theoretical Framework which Guided Survey Instrument Development

CONTEXT OF THE CASE STUDY RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

	Contextual Factors		
Experiential Time When the Study Was Conducted	**Programmatic**	**Course**	**Individual**
Past	(Not assessed.)	(Not assessed.)	
Present			
Future	(Not assessed.)	(Not assessed.)	

IMPACT OF THE CASE STUDY RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

	Knowledge Gained		
Experiential Components of the Case Study	**Theoretical**	**Substantive**	**Practical**
Role Investigated			
Research Processes			

Questionnaire Administration

Questionnaires Set Out

Consistent with the design of the study, forty-four Questionnaires were sent to students. Contained in the Questionnaire was a set of directions. Upon completion of the Questionnaire, respondents were directed to return it in an enclosed self-address and pre-stamped envelope.

Of the 44 students to whom Questionnaires were mailed, 2 (4.5%) could be classified as non-educators, and 42 (95.5%) could be classified as educators. Of the non-educators, one was a hospital administrator and the other was a university assistant track coach. Of the 42 who could be classified as educators, 2 (4.8%) were education college professors, 6 (14.3%) were private school personnel, and 34 (80.1%) were public school personnel. Excluding the college professors and including both private and public school educators, none of the educators held the position of superintendent, 2 (5.0%) held the position of assistant superintendent, 1 (2.5%) held the position of business manager, 7 (17.5%) held the position of program administrator, 5 (12.5%) held the position of principal, 2 (5.0%) held the position of vice principal, 1 (2,5%) held the position of communications disorders specialist, 1 (2.5%) the position of school psychologist, 1 (2.5%) held the position of curriculum and instruction specialist, and 20 (50.0%) held the position of teacher.

Forty (90.9%) of the 42 students held positions and resided in the State of Washington, and of the remaining 4 (9.1%), 1

(2.3%) held a position and lived in the State of Idaho, and the other 3 (6.8%) resided in Asian countries and held positions in American international schools. Twenty-five (56,9%) of the students were men, and 19 (43,2%) were women.

Questionnaires Received

The analysis is based on the return of 23 (56.8%) useable Questionnaires.

Analyses of Data

The following is a limited and simplified analysis of the Questionnaire data. The analysis is based on the return of only 23 (52.2%) useable Questionnaires. In the analysis, only descriptive statistics are used to analyze the data. Additionally, statistical procedures are not employed to specifically explore the relationship between contextual factors and impact experiences. However, possible relationships are suggested. Considering the limitations of and simplifications in the analysis, the conclusions based on the analysis must be viewed as suggestive rather than conclusive.

The Context of the Case Study Research Experience

Programmatic

As noted above, programmatic contextual factors which are related to the case study research experience of the students have not been considered in this analysis.

Course

Similar to the programmatic contextual factors, course factors which are related to the case study research experience of the students are not considered in the present analysis. It

is anticipated that both the programmatic and course factors will be considered in subsequent analyses.

Individual

In the analysis which follows, only the individual contextual factors are analyzed. Hence, items in the Questionnaire which are concerned with programmatic and course factors are not considered.

In the Questionnaire, fifteen items were employed to assess the aspects of the individual context of the case study research experience. Of the 15 items, only eight are used in the analysis.

Past. The past experiences of individuals are considered to be related to the way they experience present and future activities. In the Questionnaire, past experiences are assessed in two areas. These include past professional experience in public education and past academic experience.

Considering past professional experience of the respondents, the number of years of experience in public education ranged from 3 to 25 with an average of about 13 years. And, for the respondents, the number of years of experience in their current positions ranged from 1 to 15 years with an average of about 5 years.

Considering past academic experience, for about 22% of the respondents their highest academic achievement was at the bachelors level; and for about 28%, their highest academic achievement was at the masters level.

Present. The present circumstances of individuals are also considered to be related to the way they experience new and different activities. In the Questionnaire, the present circumstances of the respondents were assessed in term of their gender and the characteristics of their current positions.

With respect to gender, 17 (74%) of the respondents were men, and 26% were women.

With respect to current positions, 22 held positions in school districts. Of these, 7 held the position of teacher, 5 the position of principal, 6 the position of district program coordinator or director, and 4 the position of district assistant superintendent or superintendent.

With respect to current positions, 20 of the 23 respondents held positions in school districts. These school district ranged in size from one with a student enrollment of about 1,250 to a district with 10,500 students. The mean student enrollment across all districts was about 3,860.

Fourteen of the 23 respondents reported holding positions in schools. With respect to student enrollment, these schools ranged in size from a low of 80 students to a high of 1,800 students with an average of about 900 students.

Future. The expectations individuals hold for themselves at future times are considered to be related to the way they experience new and novel activities. In the Questionnaire future expectation of respondents were assessed in terms of graduate degrees and/or advanced educational certification anticipated. Of the 23 respondents, 16 were working on advanced graduate

degrees. And of the same 23 respondents, 13 were working on advanced educational certification.

It can be concluded that collectively the respondents were well educated and professionally experienced. Additionally, the group of respondents was fairly balanced in terms of the numbers of men and women, the types of positions held, and the sizes of districts and schools in which they held positions. Furthermore, the respondents collectively were academically and professionally motivated.

Impact of the Case Study Research Experience

The impact of the case study research experience on students was analyzed in terms of the knowledge gained about the role which was the focus of the study and the knowledge gained about research through the research process. The overall impact of the experience was also assessed. The means of the responses by item, across items within cells, and across cells are summarized in a matrix presented in Figure 2. It is important to note that although the column means are calculated and presented in Figure 2, they are not considered in the analysis because they have no particular meaning.

Role Investigated in the Study by Type of Knowledge Gained

The impact of the case study research experience, in terms of the knowledge gained about the role investigated was analyzed in terms of theoretical, substantive, and practical knowledge gained.

Theoretical. Two items were employed to assess level of theoretical knowledge gained concerning the focus of the study.

Figure 2

Response-Mean Matrix for Impact-of-the-Case-Study-Research-Experience Items on the Leadership and Role Study Questionnaire*

IMPACT OF THE CASE STUDY RESEARCH EXPERIENCE
(46) = 4.435
(47) = 4.045
4.240

	Knowledge Gained			
Experiential Components of the Case Study	**Theoretical**	**Substantive**	**Practical**	**Row Means**
Role Investigated	(31) = 4.174 (32) = 4.174 **4.174**	(33) = 3.957 (34) = 3.913 (35) = 4.174 (36) = 4.043 **4.028**	(37) = 3.522 **3.522**	**3.994**
Research Processes	(38) = 4.261 (39) = 4.304 **4.283**	(40) = 4.348 **4.348**	(41) = 4.435 (42) = 4.261 (43) = 4.304 (44) = 4.217 (45) = 4.087 **4.261**	**4.277**
Column Means	**4.228**	**4.087**	**4.138**	**Grand Mean** **4.145**

* The numbers in parentheses refer to items on the Questionnaire. The non-bold numbers not in parentheses in the cells are the means for item responses. And, the bold numbers are the means across item responses.

For the statement, (Item 31) I gained a theoretical understanding of the role which I studied, 56.5% of the respondents agreed with the statement, while, 30.4% strongly agreed and 13.0% were neutral. The mean response was 4.174. And for the statement, (Item 32) I gained a theoretical appreciation of the concept of leadership, 39.1% strongly agreed, 43.5% agreed, 13.0% were neutral, and 4.3% disagreed. The mean response was 4.174. Considering the two items, the mean response was 4.174.

Hence, it can be concluded that through the case study research experience, students gained theoretical knowledge of the role which was the focus of the study.

Substantive. Four items in the Questionnaire were used to assess the level of substantive knowledge gained regarding the role which was the focus of the study. Three of the items (33, 34, & 35) were designed to assess the level of knowledge gained about the role with respect to the community, school district, and school. The fourth item (36) was designed to assess the level of specific knowledge gained about the role itself.

For the statement, (Item 33) I learned how a community relates to a school in a very specific way, 26.1% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statements, 52.2% agreed with the statement, 13.0% were neutral, and 8.7% disagreed. The mean response was 3.957. For the statement, (Item 34) I learned how a school relates to a district in a very specific way, 26.1% of the respondents strongly agreed, 47.8% agreed, 17.4% were neutral, and 8.7% disagreed. The mean response was 3.913. For the statement, (Item 35) I learned how a role relates to a school

in a very specific way, 43.5% strongly agreed, 34.8, agreed, 17.4% were neutral, and 4,3% disagreed. The mean response was 4.174. For the statement, (Item 36) I learned about very concrete aspects of a position, 30.4% of the respondents strongly agreed, 43.5% agreed, and 26.1% were neutral. The mean response was 4.043. Considering the four items, the mean response was 4.028.

It can be concluded that from the case study experience, students gained substantive knowledge of the role which was the focus of the study. However, the level of knowledge gained about how the role relates to the community and district is less than that gained about how the role relates to the school. A high level of substantive knowledge gained was concerned with very concrete aspects of the role.

Practical. One item was used to assess the level of practical knowledge gained about the role was the focus of the study. For the statement (Item 37) I learned practical job skills, 17.4% of the respondents strongly agreed, 34.8% agreed, 30.4% were neutral, and 17.4% disagreed. The mean response was 3.522.

In contrast to the other two categories of knowledge, it can be concluded that the students did not gain very much practical knowledge related to the role which was the focus of the study.

Overall Knowledge Gained of the Role. Considering the seven items used to assess the levels of theoretical, substantive, and practical knowledge gained, the mean response was 3.994.

Research Processes of the Study by Type of Knowledge Gained. The impact of the case study research experience on the students, in terms of the knowledge gained about research through the research process, was analyzed in terms of theoretical, substantive, and practical knowledge gained.

Theoretical. Two items were employed to assess level of knowledge gained concerning educational research in general and qualitative research in particular. For the statement, (Item 39) I gained a better appreciation for educational research, 34.8% of the respondents strongly agreed, 60.9% agreed, and 4.3% were neutral. The mean response was 4.304. And, for the statement, (Item 38) I obtained a theoretical understanding of qualitative research, 34.8% strongly agreed, 60.9% agreed, and 4.3% were neutral. The mean response was 4.261. Considering the two items, the mean response was 4.283.

It can be concluded that case study research experience does provide students with theoretical knowledge of educational research as well as qualitative research.

Substantive. One item in the Questionnaire was used to assess the level of substantive knowledge gained regarding educational research employing a qualitative research methodology. For the statement, (Item 40) I learned how to design, conduct, and report a qualitative study, 43.5% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement, 52.2% of the respondents agreed with the statement, and 4.3% were disagreed. The mean response was 4.348.

It can be concluded that from the case study research experience, students gain a relatively high level of substantive

knowledge about how to design, conduct, and report a qualitative study.

Practical. Five items were used to assess the level of practical knowledge gained about the research process. For the statement, (Item 41) I developed my interviewing skills, 43.5% of the respondents strongly agreed, and 56.5% agreed. The mean response was 4.436. For the statement, (Item 42) I developed my observational skills, 34.8% strongly agreed, 56.5% agreed, and 8.7% were neutral. The mean response was 4.261. For the statement, (Item 43) I developed my data recording skills, 39.1% strongly agreed, 52.2% agreed, and 8.7% were neutral. The mean response was 4.304. For the statement, (Item 44) I developed skills to analyze data, 39.1% strongly agreed, 43.5% agreed, and 17.4% were neutral. The mean response was 4.217. And, for the statement, (Item 45) I improved my writing skills, 30.4% strongly agreed, 47.8% agreed, and 21.7% were neutral. The mean response was 4.087. Considering the five items, the mean response was 4.261.

It can be concluded that through the research component of the case study research experience, students gained a relatively high level of practical knowledge. However, they gained most practical knowledge in the area of interviewing skills and the least in writing skills.

Overall Knowledge Gained of Research Processes. Considering the eight items employed to assess the level of knowledge of research processes gained, the mean response was 4.277.

Overall Impact of the Case Study Research Experience

Two items in the Questionnaire were used to assess the overall impact of the case study research experience. Additionally, the overall impact of the case study research experience was assessed by aggregating the responses of items by rows and columns in the matrix shown in Figure 2.

With respect to the statement, (Item 46) I am satisfied with the benefits I gained from conducting the leadership/roles study, 50% of the respondents strongly agreed, and 45% agreed with the statement. For the statement, (Item 47) I am satisfied with my report of my study, 30% strongly agreed, 45% agreed, 10% were neutral, and 10% disagreed. It can be concluded that most respondents were very satisfied with the overall case study research experience, yet many were not satisfied with the written reports of their case studies.

Considering the four items which assess level of theoretical knowledge gained, regardless of the experiential component, the mean response was 4.228. Considering the five items which assess the level of substantive knowledge gained, regardless of the experiential component, the mean response was 4.087. And, considering the six items employed to assess the level of practical knowledge gained, regardless of the experiential component, the mean response was 4.138.

Considering the fifteen items used collectively to assess the impact of the case study research, the mean response was 4.145.

Conclusions

The graduate students who were enrolled in the School Organization and Administration course, who collectively were well educated and professionally experienced and who were academically and professionally motivated, found the case study research experience useful in their professional and academic preparation. Both the experiential components of the case study research experience had a substantial impact. However, the research component clearly had a greater impact on students than did the component concerned with the role investigated.

Within the research component, the case study research experience had the greatest impact on the substantive knowledge gained and the least on the practical knowledge gained. The impact of the theoretical knowledge gained was very close to, yet greater than, the practical knowledge gained.

With respect to the practical knowledge of research skills gained, the impact of individual skills, in decreasing order, was interviewing, data recording, observing, data analyzing, and writing.

With respect to theoretical knowledge of research gained, the greater impact was concerned with an appreciation for educational research and the lessor was concerned with a theoretical understanding of qualitative research.

Considering the impact of the case study research experience in terms of the role investigated, the greatest impact was the theoretical knowledge of the role gained, and the least was the practical knowledge associated with the role.

With respect to the theoretical knowledge of the role gained, both theoretical knowledge of the role and theoretical knowledge of leadership gained had the same level of impact.

Considering the substantive knowledge of the role gained, the most knowledge gained was concerned with how the role relates to the school, and the least knowledge gained was how the school relates to the community. Between these, more knowledge was gained regarding concrete aspects of the role, and less knowledge was gained concerning the school relates to the district.

Observations and Recommendations Regarding Students as Case Researchers and Writers

Based on the conclusions of the study reported above and the personal experiences of the course professor, several observations and recommendations are offered regarding providing students in preparation programs for school administration with case study research experiences.

The case study research experience is a partial solution to problems previously discussed with the educational administration foundational literature. Students do get an authentic understanding of a real administrative or related role in the context of a real school in a real district. However, the important constraint of student time limits the depth and breath of the understanding gained in the case study research experience. Well conceptualized, conducted, and reported research requires the luxury of large quantities of unstructured time. To some extent, class discussions and more formal

presentations tend to broaden and deepen understanding yet they cannot make up for the time constraints students face.

Case study research is research. And, as research, most knowledge is generated and realized after the case study has been completed in its final written form. Students report that it is after the course and case study have been completed that most understanding of the role and appreciation for the research enterprise is gained.

Most students develop important research skills in conducting case studies. Students find these an unanticipated benefit. The skills of questioning, listening, observing, recording, analyzing, and writing are skills which have direct applicability to educational administration.

The satisfaction most students experience in conducting and reporting a case study needs to be reemphasized. It is the type of satisfaction one receives after hard work resulting in a very presentable product. Genuine student satisfaction from the case study research experience, as in any teaching, leads to considerable teacher satisfaction.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Leadership/Studies Case Studies

The following are the case studies of the students included in the study sample. The studies are grouped by the semester the study was conducted and reported. Each study should be regarded as an unpublished paper of the Department of Educational Administration & Supervision, Washington State University, Pullman, Washington 11964-2136.

Spring 1989

Fromm, Robert E. (1989). The Role of the Secondary Athletic Direction: A Field Study.

Kelly, Daniel J. (1989). The School District Business Manager. A Field Study.

Li, Li. (1989). High School Coaches: A Qualitative Study.

McCurdy, Gail S. (1989). Analysis of the Position of Personnel Assistant.

Remaley, Anne L. (1989). The Role of Curriculum Coordinator: A Leadership Dilemma.

Reidenbach, Duane K. (1989). The Role of the Secondary School Athletic Director/Activities Director: A Field Study.

Rowse, Lynn. (1989). The School Psychologist: A Study of the Role in an Urban District.

Scheele, Majean. (1989). The Unofficial Second Commander: A Field Study of the Role of the School District's Secretary to the Superintendent.

Weinmann, Terry L. (1989). The Role of the Elementary Building Custodian. A Field Study.

Summer 1989

Cox, Donald L. (1989). Superintendent Leadership: The Control of Principals.

DeGabrile, Sandra C. & Rawls, David L. (1989). The Interim Superintendent as a Change Agent.

Hammond, Coral V. (1989). Leadership in the Role of the Assistant Superintendent.

Jamison, David L. (1989). Leadership in Public Schools: A Field Study.

Kelly Raymond S. (1989). Maintaining and Implementing a Personal Projection While Implementing and Maintaining a District Projection.

Mesa-Johnson, Delcine & Cox, John. (1989). The Modernization of a Rural School: A Leadership Study.

Phillips Robert J. & Weakely, Karen L. (1989). Effective Visionary Leadership in a Decentralized School District: A Single-Subject Case Study.

Radich Paula A. (1989). A View of Leadership Through Jason Bradley's Actions and Projections at Windsor Junior High School.

Wadlington William J. (1989). Leadership Actions and Projections: A Leadership Research Project.

Fall 1989

Busch, Phyllis N. (1989). Leadership Study of a Principal in a Target School.

Chambers, James M. (1989). A Study of Leadership Style in the Role of Superintendent of School: A Single Subject Case Study.

Dale, Elizabeth. (1989). The Leadership Style of Principal Lydia Collins, Jackson Elementary School.

David, Donald D. (1989). Leadership: A Look at an Elementary School Principal.

Jordan, Maria P. (1989). A Leadership Study of a Curriculum Coordinator at the Eastmont School District.

Nelson, Brian J. (1989). A Leadership Study: A Study of a Secondary Principal's Leadership.

Nelson, Bryan H. (1989). An Experienced Principal in a New District: A Research Study.

Scovil, Mildred. (1989). Organizational Change: A Change in Leadership Style.

White, Steven J. (1989). A Leadership Study of a High School Principal.

Summer 1990

Brownlee, Jeannie L. (1990). A Case Study of the Leadership Style of Jan Hart: An Elementary School Principal.

Davis, Kevin S. (1990). A Principal in a Small "B-Size" School District: A Field Study of Leadership and Organizational Styles.

Fox, Beverly. (1990). A Leadership Case Study of a High School Principal.

Harder, Carl. (1990). Every Knight Has a Day: A Study in Leadership Style.

Holladay, Marilyn J. (1990). Middle School Principal in an International Setting: A Case Study.

Hughes, Allen T. (1990). Leadership Projection: A Study of the Rural Superintendency.

Jones, Eleanor J. (1990). Projection and Action in an International School: A Leadership Study.

Klock, Kathy. (1990). One Elementary School Principal: A Leadership Study.

McMullen Justine C. (1990). A Secondary Vice Principal as a Change Agent for Cultural Socialization.

Michaelis, Randall B. (1990). A Single Case Study of an Experienced Principal's Leadership Style in a New Building.

Orr, James. L. (1990). The Business Manager: A Leadership Study.

Pratt, Diana R. (1990). A Study of the Leadership Style of William Tell in Wheatfield University.

Randolph, William. (1990). The Leadership Style of Tracy Dickson at Rose Bud Elementary School: A Preliminary Examination.

Ziebell, Wesley W. (1990). Leadership and Role of the Principal: A Single Subject Leadership Study.

Appendix B

The Self-Response Questionnaire

LEADERSHIP AND ROLE STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE

I have been asked to prepare a paper on the effectiveness of using leadership and role study assignments in educational administration courses. In assessing the effectiveness of these assignments, it is important that I get input from the graduate students who completed the assignments. Would you please fill out this questionnaire as soon as possible and return it to me immediately in the enclosed envelope. If an item does not apply to you, please write **N/A** by the item number. All responses will be held strictly confidential.

Note that the addresses on the envelopes are different from Washington State University because I am on a sabbatical leave this academic year working at the California Educational Research Cooperative (CERC) in the School of Education, University of California, Riverside.

Please mail your completed questionnaire in the self-addressed stamped envelope to Donald B. Reed, CERC Office, School of Education, University of California, P.O. Box 112, Riverside, CA 92502-9966. If you should have any questions, please call me at my office, (714) 787-3026, or at my home, (714) 683-4749. Thanks for your help and assistance.

Donald B. Reed
Associate Professor
Washington State University

Statements 1-3 refer to your program in the Department of Educational Administration & Supervision at Washington State University **at the time you took the ED AD 580 course**, Spring 1989, Summer 1989, Fall 1989, or Summer 1990.

Please respond to the following statements by circling the appropriate number where:

5 = Strongly agree	4 = Agree	3 = Equally agree and disagree	2 = Disagree	1 = Strongly disagree

1. The program in Educational Administration is a useful experience. 5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1
2. The sequence of courses in my degree /credential program is appropriate. 5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1
3. I took the ED AD 580 course at about the right time in my program. 5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1

Turn over the page and continue.

Statements 5-12 refer to the School Organization and Administration course' (ED AD 580) **at the time you took the course**.

Please respond to the following statements by circling the appropriate number where:

5 = Strongly agree	4 = Agree	3 = Equally agree and disagree	2 = Disagree	1 = Strongly disagree

5. The content of the course was appropriate. 5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1
6. I gained insights from the course. 5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1
7. I learned from the other students in the course. 5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1
8. The assignments in the course were useful. 5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1
9. The amount of work in the course was about right. 5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1
10. The leadership/role study was a useful assignment. 5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1
11. The leadership/role study required an appropriate amount of time. 5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1
12. In comparison to other assignments in the ED AD 580 course, I found the study the most useful. 5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1

Statements 13-30 refer to you **at the time you took the ED AD 580 course**.

Please fill in the blank or respond as indicated. Where years are requested, round off to the nearest full year.

13. I was enrolled in the ED AD 580 course during: **(Circle one.)**

Spring 1989 -- Summer 1989 -- Fall 1989 -- Summer 1990

14. The study I conducted was a: **(Circle one.)**

Leadership Study -- Role Study

15. I presented my study in class. **(Circle one.)** **Yes -- No**

Continue on the next page.

16. I presented my study in a setting other than class. **(Circle one.)** **Yes -- No**

17. The number of years of professional experience I had in public education was: _____

18. The number of years in my current position was: _____

19. The highest academic degree I held was a: **(Circle one.)**

Bachelors Degree -- Masters Degree -- Doctoral Degree

20. The name of the highest level of Washington education certification I held was: _____

21. My gender is: **(Circle one.)** **Male -- Female**

22. The title of my current position was: _____

23. The level of my current position was: **(Circle one.)**

Elementary School -- Middle/Junior High School -- High School

Central Office -- Other: _____ (Specify.)

24. The student enrollment in my school was: _____

25. The student enrollment in my district was: _____

26. I was working toward completing the requirements for a Washington education certificate. **(Circle one.)** **Yes -- No**

27. I was working toward completing the requirements for an advanced degree at Washington State University. **(Circle one.)** **Yes -- No**

28. The Washington certificate I was working toward was: _____

29. The advanced degree I was working toward was: _____

30. The next professional position I wanted to hold was: _____

Turn over the page and continue.

Statements 31-47 refer to the leadership/role study you conducted in the ED AD 580 course.

Please respond to the following statements by circling the appropriate number where:

5 = Strongly agree	4 = Agree	3 = Equally agree and disagree	2 = Disagree	1 = Strongly disagree

31.	I gained a theoretical understanding of the role which I studied.	5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1
32.	I gained a theoretical appreciation of the concept of leadership.	5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1
33.	I learned how a community relates to a school in a very specific way.	5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1
34.	I learned how a school relates to a district in a very specific way.	5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1
35.	I learned how a role relates to a school in a very specific way	5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1
36.	I learned about very concrete aspects of a position.	5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1
37.	I learned practical job skills.	5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1
38.	I obtained a theoretical understanding of qualitative research.	5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1
39.	I gained a better appreciation for educational research.	5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1
40.	I learned how to design, conduct, and report a qualitative study.	5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1
41.	I developed my interviewing skills.	5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1
42.	I developed my observational skills.	5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1
43.	I developed my data recording skills.	5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1
44.	I developed skills to analyze data.	5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1
45.	I improved my writing skills.	5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1
46.	I am satisfied with the benefits I gained from conducting the leadership/role study.	5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1
47.	I am satisfied with my report of my study.	5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1

Continue on the next page.

With very few words, please respond to questions 48-51.

48. What recommendations do you have for improving the leadership/role study assignment?

49. What were the most important benefits of the leadership/role study?

50. In this questionnaire, what was not asked that should have been asked? For any, indicate the question and give your response.

51. If you have any other comments regarding any aspect of the leadership/role study or this questionnaire, please make them here.

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Now, please return it to Donald B. Reed, CERC Office, School of Education, University of California, P.O. Box 112, Riverside, CA 92502-9966.

Appendix C

Leadership and Role Study Questionnaire Item Matrix*

CONTEXT OF THE CASE STUDY RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

	Contextual Factors		
Experiential Time When the Study Was Conducted	**Programmatic**	**Course**	**Individual**
Past	(Not assessed.)	(Not assessed.)	17, 18, 19 & 20
Present	1, 2 & 3	5, 6, 7, 8 9, 10, 11 & 12	13, 14, 15 16, 21, 22 23, 24 & 25
Future	(Not assessed.)	(Not assessed.)	26, 27, 28 29 & 30

IMPACT OF THE CASE STUDY RESEARCH EXPERIENCE (46 & 47)

	Knowledge Gained		
Experiential Components of the Case Study	**Theoretical**	**Substantive**	**Practical**
Role Investigated	31 & 32	33, 34 35, & 36	37
Research Processes	38 & 39	40	41, 42, 43 44 & 45

* The numbers within the matrix cells refer to the items in the Questionnaire contained in Appendix B. The Questionnaire does not contain an item numbered 4.